(b) Law and Order is a State subject, hence primarily; it is the responsibility of the State/District administration to take necessary deterrent action to stop/curb pilferage/theft of coal. However, coal companies have taken the following steps to check theft/pilferage of coal:

1. Collection of intelligence reports about illegal coal depots and illegal movement of coal and informing district authorities of the same for taking preventive action/filing of FIR.

2. Installation of check posts at vulnerable points to check transport documents.

3. Construction of watch towers and providing lighting arrangements around the coal stacking area.

4. Erection of barbed wire wall fencing around pithead depots, static mining including deployment of armed guards during the nighthours.

5. Escorting of loaded rakes up to railway weigh bridges by armed guards and joint patrolling with Railway Protection Force (RPF) in the railways track which are prone to wagon looting.

6. Sealing of illegal mining spots.

7. Stringent action against transport vehicles caught in the act of theft or pilferage.

8. Engagement of lady security guards for preventing women and children indulging in the theft/pilferage of coal, strengthening of the security discipline by reassessing the requirement of security personnel, horizontal movement of executives with aptitude for security work and inducting qualified security personnel at junior, middle and senior level.

9. Training of existing security personnel refresher training of CISF personnel and basic training of new recruits in security discipline for strengthening the security setup.

10. The coal companies maintain close liaison with the State authorities.

(c) As per the New Coal Distribution Policy 2007, there is no provision of public distribution system for fuel coal to the people in the neighbouring areas of coal mines. However, in order to meet the genuine requirement of the units in small and medium sector like smokeless fuel, brick kiln, coke oven units etc. on a transparent and scientific basis and distribute coal to them accordingly, a quantity of 8 million tonnes of coal annually has been earmarked. This quantity is allocated for distribution to those units/consumers in small and medium sector whose requirement is less than 4200 tonnes per annum and are otherwise not having any access to purchase coal or conclude Fuel Supply Agreement for coal supply with coal companies. The earmarked quantity is distributed through agencies notified by the State Governments.

National policy of coal for all sectors

†1093. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that the availability of coal in the country is insufficient, which is adversely affecting the coal based small industries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government would consider formulation of a national policy to ensure the availability of coal for all sectors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): (a) and (b) As per Annual Plan 2008-09, the all India coal demand is estimated to be 550 million tonnes and the total indigenous availability is estimated at 497.29 million tonnes. Therefore, there is a gap of 52.71 million tonnes which is proposed to be met by imports in the power and other sectors. Despite this position, during 2008-09, the Government is making all efforts to ensure that coal requirement for small industries is met to the extent possible. For this purpose, 8 million tonnes of coal has been exclusively earmarked during 2008-09 for distribution to small and medium industries, Whose annual requirement is less than 4200 tonnes per annum, through state nominated agencies. Further, such consumers can also source their requirement through e-auction. CIL has already offered about 61 million tonnes of coal through e-auction during April-November, 2008.

(c) In view of observations and directions of Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of M/s. Ashoka Smokeless Coal India Pvt. Limited and Ors. *Vs* Union of India and Ors. Government had constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary (Coal) to give recommendations on a coal distribution policy. Based on the recommendations of this Committee, Government approved the New Coal Distribution Policy in October, 2007. The said policy envisages providing coal to all genuine consumers of all the sectors in a transparent and commercially enforceable manner.

Underground fire in Jharia coalfields

1094. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the underground fires in Jharia coalfields;

(b) if so, whether due to underground fires in Jharia coalfields a large number of families living at Dhanbad Raniganj have been displaced;

(c) if so, whether Government has taken any steps to check the spread of underground fires and to provide help to the affected families; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. As per Master Plan for Jharia Coal field dealing with fire, rehabilitation of people from endangered areas and diversion of surface infrastructure in the leasehold of Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) updated in July, 2006, 98314 houses from 595 sites due to fire and